

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1-8. Canceled.

9. (Original) A method comprising the steps of:

receiving a first packet from a first communication unit and a second packet from a second communication unit to respectively produce a first received packet and a second received packet, wherein each of the first received packet and the second received packet comprises a packet identifier;

sorting the first and second received packets according to their respective packet identifiers;

forwarding the sorted first and second received packets to an upstream component of a communication system;

receiving a third packet from the first communication unit and a fourth packet from a third communication unit to respectively produce a third received packet and a fourth received packet, wherein each of the third received packet and the fourth received packets comprises a packet identifier;

sorting the third and fourth received packets according to their respective packet identifiers;

forwarding the sorted third and fourth received packets to the upstream component;

comparing, by the upstream component, the first received packet to the third received packet; and

forwarding, by the upstream component, the first received packet or the third received packet based on the comparison.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the second communication unit and the third communication unit are the same communication unit.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein first received packet is a first soft-handoff (SHO) leg of the first packet and the third received packet is a second SHO leg of

the first packet.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the upstream component is a packet selector.

13-20. Canceled.

21. (Original) A communication system comprising:

a first transceiver that receives a first packet from a first communication unit to produce a first received packet that comprises a packet identifier, receives a second packet from a second communication unit to produce a second received packet that comprises a packet identifier, sorts the first and second received packets according to their respective packet identifiers, and forwards the sorted first and second received packets to a packet selector;

a second transceiver that receives a third packet from the first communication unit to produce a third received packet that comprises a packet identifier, receives a fourth packet from a third communication unit to produce a fourth received packet that comprises a packet identifier, sorts the third and fourth received packets according to their respective packet identifiers, and forwards the sorted third and fourth received packets to the packet selector; and

a packet selector that receives the sorted first and second received packets from the first transceiver and the sorted third and fourth received packets from the second transceiver, compares the first received packet to the third received packet, and, based on the comparison, forwards the first received packet or the third received packet.

22. (Original) The communication system of claim 21, wherein the second communication unit and the third communication unit are the same communication unit.

23. (Original) The communication system of claim 21, wherein the first received packet is a first soft-handoff (SHO) leg of the first packet and the third received packet is a second SHO leg of the first packet.